

9-28-67

• Dear Mr. Weisberg:

Thank you for your letter and interest. -It looked like I was behind the wheel. Blood on the floor there and a crack in the windshield above the steering wheel. The steering wheel itself was badly twisted back toward the dash but I had no bruises in chest or soreness from that. There was a fresh tear in the carpeting on the passenger side. - There were no witnesses. The police said they heard the crash.

By chance I knew the ambulance driver. He had been monitoring the police radio. He told his sister in law that there were calls out on my car at least 30 minutes before the crash and that there was an early report of a young man or boy running from the scene. He later hedged on this but did not deny it. (If true it could be the young woman: short hair, blue jeans, tall.)

I have found out the following that happened during my black out period. The car was seen parked behind a saloon downtown. The young woman went in, made a phone call, came back out, talked to police who she said warned her out of a yellow zone. The car was next in Webb City, Mo., 8 miles away parked on a side street. The Webb City police came up to the car and asked what was going on and specifically what was wrong with me as I was sprawled across the seat. She told them I was sick. (I assume unconscious since she had to answer for me.) E She admits to all this. And she says that then she drove us back to Joplin and turned the car over to me. Minutes later, by her timetable, the crash occurred about 6 blocks from her house, *I having drunk up 5 police cars!*

This I remember: earlier in the evening she had lent her car to two young men and a girl to take to the drive in movie in Webb City. They left about 8 o'clock. I did not know them. (Her explanation of the phone call and the trip to Webb City was that she was trying to check up on her car. She was parked on the side street to wait for these people to show up. They did not so she came back to Joplin. 10 is a little early to start out looking for your car if you have lent it to someone to go to a drive in movie in another city. So maybe the Webb City incident is an indication that I was given a fixed drink and taken over there under some circumstances peculiar enough to arouse the attention of the Webb City police. -But a fixed drink would not explain my demon ride behind the wheel a short time later.)

The police are telling the insurance people that I was drunk and running. I was not charged with either. My lawyer got this across and when the case got into the hands of the city prosecutor he was very nice, agreed to recommend a fine of \$50. and I could plead Not Guilty. So now all I am stuck with is a damaged reputation and coming trouble with the insurance company. They've not been near me yet, which worries me.

I've only had hard liquor twice this year, once too many. I don't pass out. I've never had a blackout concerning the main lines of where I have been and what I have done. There are several other very odd little things - but it would take pages to tell them and I can't see what significance they could have. -Suffice it too say that the whole thing

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is still too mysterious and inexplicable for me to let it go. It is quite literally making me incompetent and sick at my stomach trying to puzzle it out. -I feel though that I will master it pretty soon. For my own peace of mind I must.

I am anxious to read your next books and will send checks soon in answer to your flyers. You know I want all this. I will wait a while longer to write Mr. Billings for my pictures back and Mr. Wing of AP about the differences. I am not in the mood now. -If you have time I would like an up to date assessment of Mr. Garrison. I can't follow his operation in our local papers.

I hope your wife feels better. Your involvement in the case must be terribly nerve wracking to her. The whole thing is in so many ways utterly sickening and frightening.

I am so pleased about your geese and cats (if that publicity is true.). I wondered if cats and geese got along together! I have one handsome cat. And my mother loves geese best of anything, from her childhood when they were her pets. I would like to have one or two or whatever for her but she is afraid the cat would get them, so I haven't bought any.

I have room for a horse. But I am just tempted to get a jackass. I can see myself in white cowboy hat and Mexican serape riding into town, with arms folded and chin dropping, on that jackass. With my newly acquired reputation as a rakehell and oddball, that would really stun the populace. -I have almost decided that it is better to be talked about than not in an ignorant place like this.

Sincerely,



Beverly Brunson

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You can imagine that my escapade, if it was that, has grown to astounding proportions. An example of how stories grow in a little place like this, a plumber here told my father once that he had found a two foot garter snake backed up into his toilet stool; one week later a woman came into the office and told me that this plumber had found a twelve foot snake in his stool. So I can assure you that to this town there has never been a public enemy number one like me. I think all these Christians and know nothings have just been waiting for me to do something besides read a book, a suspicious enough activity in itself. I wish I could relax and laugh about it all. I could if it weren't so mysterious and hurtful.